when in health, giving themselves to the wildness of the one, and now in trouble, clinging to the strictness of the other, and generally remaining in a kind of neutral territory, like the false prophet's coffin, seeming to hang by the heavens, but truly upon the earth.* Mma De Sevigne expresses, with her usual *naivete,* the feelings of multitudes:—"I wish very much I could be religious. *I* plague La Mousse about it every day. I belong at present neither to God nor the devil; and I find this condition very uncomfortable, though between you and me the most natural in the world/'

ILLTOTEATIVB NOTE (A.)—THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF MANKIND.

*

Our ordinary philosophic historians have utterly giilcd in their attempts to explain the world's history so far as it relates to religion or superstition, because they have not taken into account those principles in man's nature which now draw him towards a supernatural power, and again drive him away from it Such writers as Montesquieu arid Robertson have aeon other causes, physical or moral, but have left this one very much out of view. The clever but flippant Voltaire exhibited the repulsive or inlidel principle in hia writings, as he is said to have professed the attractive or superstitious influence nt Ms dying hour; but it wan not to bo expected of him that lie should be able to detect and develop those principle of which lie was the unconscious slave. Some of our later historical speculators, such as Guizot and Curlylo, have had occasional glimpses of the better principle, but none of them have sounded the full depths of the "spirit's mysteries," or taken sufficiently enlarged views of both principles, the better and the worse, to enable them to explain satisfactorily the most startling paBMigcs in the world's history. They have no calculus to solve so high a problem. Such writers as Hume and Gibbon, feeling all commonplace explanations to fail, can only talk of man's unaccountable madness in everything relating to religion,

These two, the attracting and repelling principle, do not., as might be supposed, nullify or destroy each other, but produce motion and powerful action liko the attractions and repulsions of electricity. According as the one or other prevails, according as there is excess or defect, there is motion towards God, or motion away from God—there is belief, or there in scepticism. Some of the most extraordinary events in the history of individuals, of i'umilU'H, and of nations, are to bo explained by these agencies. They have been the renl moving power in the production of events in which ordinary observers have discovered other and more

obvious and superficial causes, just as electricity is now acknowledged to be the cause of changes in physical phenomena, which were before referred to more palpable agents, such as heat and light. The sudden chsuigos in men's religious opinions, and the religious movements which form HO curious and melancholy a chapter in the world's history, can be understood only by the help of those deeper principles, just as the changes in the weather, the currents of the atmosphere, arid the gathering and scattering of the clouds, can be explained only by the attractions and repulsions of polar forces. These deeper principles of our nature are capable

*numo ppisaku (Nut. Hint, of Edition, Hcct. 1H) of niau'tf U'-un,I j-cli^ifniiH ntato !tn iomo " *vnacr.ouut-able* (fpcration of the mind between disbelief ami cunvidlt m," We liavo endeavoured to give au explanation of this Htate bi* pnudjiles \vhii :h Iliuao vmt) nut willing to look at.